

# Form of the element of Intangible Cultural Heritage

## Tsakonian Dance

### I. Brief presentation of the element of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)[\[1\]](#)

1. **Name:** Tsakonian dance
2. **Identification and definition**[\[2\]](#): For the Tsakonian people, Tsakonian dance is a musical and dance event as well as a particular ritual, a symbol of their collective cultural identity. It has become known throughout Greece, particularly through performances by schools and associations.
3. **ICH domain**[\[3\]](#):

☒ Oral traditions and expressions

☒ Performing arts

☒ Social practices – rituals – festive events

☐ Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe

☐ Traditional craftsmanship

☒ performing arts

#### 4. **Place**

The Tsakonian dance is performed in Tsakonia, in the southeast Peloponnese, specifically the southeast section of Kynouria, in the regional unit of Arcadia. This area has a length of 30-40 kilometres and a width of 20-25 kilometres, stretching from Paronass as far as the Argolic gulf and from Leonidio to Agios Andreas. It contains Leonidio (the largest and most important town and capital of Kynouria), Pragmatefti, Sabatiki, Livadi, Pera Melana, Tyros, Sapounakiaika, Agios Andreas, Prasto, Kastanitsa and Sitaini, as well as the hamlets of Fouska and Vaskina.

5. **Key words**[\[4\]](#): Greek traditional dance, dance performance, Tsakonia, festivals, music and dance event

### II. Communities, Institutions and/or individuals concerned

Individual(s), group(s), organisation(s)

Name:

Identity[\[5\]](#):

☐ Local Administration (community, municipality, region)

- ☐ Society
- ☐ Union
- ☐ Parish
- ☐ Association of interested parties
- ☐ Guild
- ☐ Person

**X** Other[\[6\]](#)

Those concerned with the ICH are all those who learn, through experience and as part of their daily lives, to perform the Tsakonian dance. In the past few years, an increasing number of men, women and children have been taught the dance at school or as part of a dance association.

Seat/place:

Address: ..... Postcode:.....

Tel. .... Fax.....

e-mail:..... url/web site: .....

Person(s) in charge[\[7\]](#):

Title:

Address: ..... Postcode:.....

Tel. .... Fax.....

e-mail:.....

Specialised information on the element:

Person(s) in charge

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### III. Description of the ICH element

#### 1. Short description

Tsakonian dance is performed by men and women who hold each other “arm in arm” while standing very closely to each other. The first dancer leads the group by unravelling the circular formation of the dancers into spiralling and serpentine formations. As a dance form it was and still is a symbol of the special culture that brings the Tsakonian people together, as a common feeling and expression of social “belonging”.

#### 2. Description

*“When I hear the Tsakonian dance I am moved.*

*More than that. I am proud. I shiver. Become tearful. I get a lump in my throat...”* (I. Manos, 2008)

Its geographical region was to give the name of “Tsakonian” to the dance. This happened when it was separated from the dance system of the region, was detached from the local context and incorporated into the repertoire of “national” dances that were taught in the high schools of Greece (Cheilari, 2009). In the past in Tsakonia the song would in turn give its name to the dance, the most common being “*Kinisan ta...*” (from the song “*Kinisan ta tsanopoula kai ola ta tsakonopoula*”, “*All the Tsakonian young men and youth went...*”).

The Tsakonian dance is a performing art in which all the dancers, men, women and children, form an articulated body, led by the first dancer. The leader of the dance can be either a man or a woman. The number of dancers can vary, but there must be more than fifteen so that the shapes formed by the dance can be seen. The dance begins with an open circle moving in a rightward direction, creating spiral and serpentine forms, to end in a semi-circle.

The bodies of the dancers are turned  $\frac{3}{4}$  to the right. They hold hands in such a way that the right hand of the second dancer is placed beneath the left hand of the first dancer. This clasp reduces the dancers’ freedom of movement, as their hands are immobilised at around the level of their waists, without them being able to participate actively. In the past few years the trend towards the intertwining of the dancers’ fingers has been observed, reducing their freedom of movement even more. The lead dancer holds onto the second dancer with a handkerchief, which enables him or her to make a few improvised movements, such as turns and moves to the right, but facing onto the second dancer. The other dancers perform the standard dance motifs.

Careful observation of the Tsakonian dance and its formations indicates that the dancers form a unified articulated body with a tight clasp, which brings their bodies into close contact with each other and does not permit fast and large steps.

The wave-like movement of the bodies of the dancers, in combination with the slow steps back and forth, creates the image of a large, slowly-moving snake. This image of the snake is reinforced by the spiral formation (coiling) and the snake-like movements that are performed during the dance, led by the first dancer.

#### Tsakonian dance formations

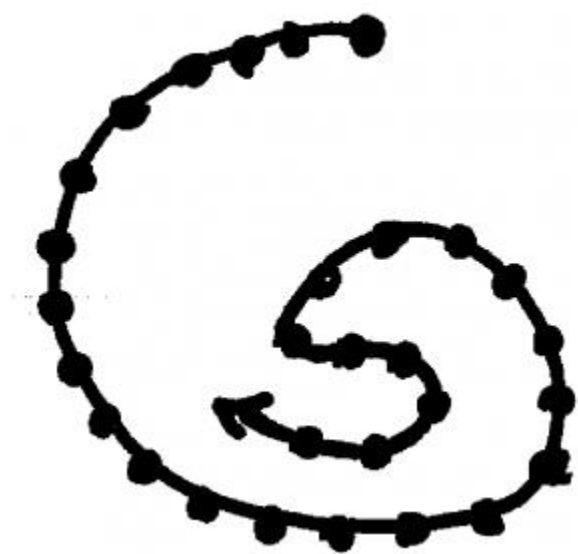
##### Formation 1



##### Formation 2.



Formation 3.



Formation 4.



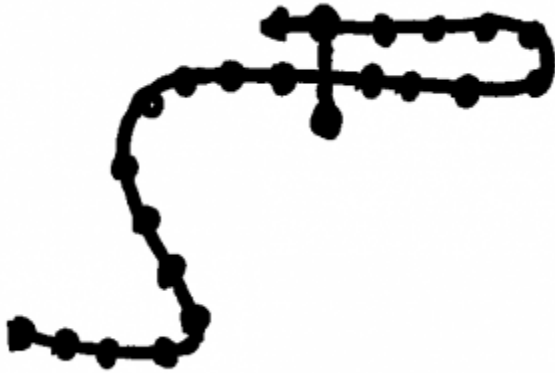
Formation 5.



Formation 6



Formation 7.



Formation 8.



The dance can be performed with: a) instrumental music and song, followed by an instrumental repetition; b) instrumental music; or c) unaccompanied song. The songs are usually performed by one person, who sings one verse that is then repeated by the group of dancers. The instruments that accompany the Tsakonian dance are the violin, clarinet, lute and, in the past, if there was a player available, the santouri (dulcimer).

The Tsakonian is not danced for pleasure or entertainment. It is a weighty and majestic dance, described by the locals as “humble”, “serious”, “austere”, “simple” and “controlled.” It is the dance that ends festivals; in other words it is the last dance, which is danced by all, with the due pomp and “sacredness”, inspiring emotion and awe.

Flamboyant moves and extravagant dancing in general are condemned because they violate the dance code and its austere and mystical character. As K. Kattis (interview, 2008) states:

If you made a mistake in the tsamikos or syrtos dance those sitting outside would not say anything about it. If you made a mistake in the Tsakonian dance or take a

different step or overdo it just once, there they'll notice and say to you "Don't adulterate it! Don't ruin it!"

It should also be noted that the Tsakonian dance has been associated with the song "I told you mother, give me in marriage, domesticate me, and don't give me away to foreign lands, mother you will regret it" (*Sou pa' mana, pantrepse me, spitonoikoyrepse me, kai sta xena mi me doseis, mana tha to metanioseis*), which was danced at the dance evenings in Piraeus and Athens. This was no coincidence. Given that every home in Tsakonia had members who had migrated, either to other parts of Greece or abroad, no other song about migration could better express the farewell greeting of the daughter to her mother. Today it is danced with the songs: "I told you mother, give me in marriage", "All the Tsakonian young men went", "I come from the City" (*Ap' tin Poli katevaino*), "On the crest of Ai-Lias" (*Stou Ai-Lia ti rachi*), "Today I came out to enjoy" (*Simeris vgika na haro*) and "Opposite Marathias" (*Apatza ttho Marasia*). In the past we also encountered other songs, such as "Your tiles are dripping" (*Stazou ta keramidia sou*), "Down at the sacred grove" (*Kato sto agio perivoli*), "My broad-leafed vine" (*Abeli mou platyfillo*) and "Father, I will go to get married" (*Fengi tha zaou na pantreftou*) (see Appendix).

According to our informants, the songs that accompany the Tsakonian dance, which they are very fond of, were sung in the Tsakonian dialect, but with the passing of time and the introduction of new songs, these older songs were forgotten. S. Rousali (1971, p. 139) has transcribed a song performed in the Tsakonian dialect, "Father, I will go to get married". Two songs in the Tsakonian dialect that are sung today, although not often, are "A Maroua tou Poia ekatsoute ta kounia" and "Opposite Marathias and beneath the olive tree" (*Apatza ttho Marasia zaka tous' ap' tin elia*). These songs are very rarely performed by dance companies. Some researchers argue that it is difficult to "match" the rhythm of the Tsakonian dance with the local dialect and this is why songs in the Tsakonian dialect are rare. Nonetheless, the songs that have been written in the past few years by talented local singers, such as G. Stamatopoulos and D. Vlamis, suggest that this is not the case.

The songs in standard modern Greek were most probably written around the mid-19th century, when King Othonas visited Leonidio. A dance performance in his honour could not but have been accompanied by such songs, given that standard modern Greek was used and accepted by a wider public. As Petakos notes (2004-2005, p. 349), "the Tsakonian language, that is the language with fixed Doric elements, was limited to being used only at the local dance events and to be supplanted by standard Greek as a linguistic passport to the wider Greek dance and, more general, cultural world. Furthermore, the diffusion of the increasingly dominant standard modern Greek into the territory of Tsakonia had, as a natural and unavoidable consequence, the creation in the region of many dance songs in the standard poetic modern Greek language".

In conclusion, Tsakonian dance is a living reality at festivals and events in the region. It is "our dance" (*o diko namou chore*), a cultural expression that



reinforces the deeply-felt local identity, giving all Tsakonians a sense of pride. It reminds the members of the community of their common heritage, the sense of a “common belonging”, of a common memory and identity.

### **3. Spaces and means of performance or implementation of the ICH element**

The Tsakonian dance is a performing art that is performed at the festivals in the region, at celebrations, weddings and christenings. Today it is also danced by the local dance companies at public events and performances: at Easter in the central square of Leonidio; at the Aubergine Festival held every August in the port of Plaka Leonidio; at the “Melitzazz” jazz festival held in early summer in Leonidio; as well as at all the festivals and events in the villages of Tsakonia. These include: the festival of St Triada and that of its cultural association in late August at Pragmatefti; the fishermen’s festival at Sabatiki; the honey festival and 15 August celebrations at Pera Melana; the feast of St Marina and the Metamorphosis of the Saviour as well as Easter at Tyros; the feast of the Archangels at Prasto; the chestnut festival at Kastanitsa; and the events of the Agios Andreas-Prasto cultural association. The Tsakonian dance is also performed by junior high school students in the region and at the Leonidio high school on national holidays.

The Tsakonian dance, which in the past brought the festivals of the locals to a close, now opens the performances by the dance companies. Its role has changed and it is now the most characteristic cultural motif, which is hence performed first so as to transmit “the local colour and style” to visitors to the region (Cheilari 2009, p. 65).

### **4. Transmission of the ICH element from one generation to the next**

In the past, it was important for parents that their children learnt the Tsakonian dance. Hence, on winter evenings by the fireside and in the gardens of the houses during the other seasons, they would teach it to their children. In fact, according to the oral testimony of the teacher Kosmas Kattis (April 2008), “it was the sacred legacy of the old timers that we learnt to dance”. As he recalls:

There were seven children. When the youngest started to walk, as soon as father came home from work he would take us out into the garden and sing so we would dance. And he insisted first of all on the dances performed at weddings. Because, if you were a bride or groom and you didn’t know how to dance, this would be embarrassing. And he made us dance when we were small. He insisted most of all on the Tsakonikos and showed us all the circles, etc. It was the sacred legacy of the old timers that we learnt to dance ...

And N. Trochanis (oral testimony, March 2008) notes:

“Our parents made us, when we were small children, follow them and learn the steps...”

Moreover, at the festivals and celebrations, weddings and christenings, the children would grab on at the end of the circle and try to copy the grownups. As D. Vlamis (oral testimony, April 2008) characteristically describes:

From the beginning, little kid that I was when I first heard it and saw them dancing it, I would go behind the grownups, I wanted to watch, to see the steps...

In this way they would learn to dance, something that continues today. Even so, the main organisations involved in teaching the Tsakonian dance now are the dance associations of Leonidio, Pragmatefti, Pera Melana, Tyros and Agios Andreas-Prastos, as well as the elementary, junior high and high schools of Tsakonia.

#### **IV. History and genealogy of the ICH element**

##### **Historical information or regional narrative about the emergence, continuity, presence and adjustments and/or modifications of the ICH element**

From the rich bibliography on the Tsakonian dance, we can see that most researchers have focused on the ancient Greek origins of the dance and their survival today. The Tsakonian dance combines many features that could support the “glory of origins” and the links with the ancient Greek past. This focus was reinforced by aspects of the dance that, cut off from their immediate or indirect context, could be compared individually with similar isolated features found in the literary and other ancient Greek sources.

The “labyrinthine formations”<sup>[8]</sup> of the dance, as seen in the shapes that the dance forms, and the ancient Greek Paeonian rhythm of 5/4 and 5/8, in combination with the local linguistic idiom (Tsakonian dialect), was considered by researchers as sufficient proof with which to claim it that it was an “ancient Greek dance”. The local intellectuals were the ones who first distinguished the Tsakonian dance on the basis of its rhythm and shapes, detaching it from its context and attributing to it the glory of ancient origins. This attempt is undoubtedly directly related to the romantic attitude to the culture of ancient Greece. For this reason, the first researchers and teachers of the dance focused on the continuity of Greek civilisation from antiquity until today, offering similar interpretations on this basis.

Sakellariou (1940) was the first to claim that this dance was the “crane”, the dance that Theseus performed at Delos, matching it to the description given by Plutarch in his “Parallel Lives”. Simon Karas, based on the Paeonian rhythm of the dance, argued that it is a very ancient cult dance that “represents in orchestral form the battle between Apollo and the Python, the snake of humidity, sickness and epidemics...” (Karas, 1996: 11-23). The view that the Tsakonian dance is one “of our ‘Pyrrhichios’ war dances” (Merikakis, 1980:85) is based on the theory of the origins of the Tsakonians from the Dorians. The same view has been expressed by T. Sarris, who argued that the Tsakonian dance “is the ancient Crane or ‘Pyrrhichios’ dance of the Spartan warriors” (Sarris, 1956: 26).

The view of the “Labyrinth” and the ancient Greek origin of the dance was adopted not only by Dora Stratou but also by many teachers of Physical Education (see Papachristou, 1960; Bikos, 1969; Dimas, 1980; Roubis, 1990; Lykesas, 1993; Karfis 2009). Furthermore, F. Bekyros and E. Tsangouri (1996: 13) believe the Tsakonian dance to be a “sacred cult dance”, arguing that “religious customs are the only ones that can withstand the passing of time.” C. Petakis, moreover, believes that the dance was a “snake charm (Petakis, 2003, p. 14).

An important role in promoting the Tsakonian dance was played by Dora Stratou. In 1961 she invited Tsakonians to participate in the dance performances at the ancient theatre of Piraeus. It is reported that they were also invited to the Philoppapos theatre in order to “show” the Tsakonian dance to the dancers of the company there. Today, the Tsakonian dance is an important part of the performances of the Dora Stratou Dance Theatre, ending the show along with the *kalamatianos* and the *tsamiko*.

Indeed, the importance that Dora Stratou attributed to the Tsakonian dance can be seen on the cover of the book *Greek Traditional Dances* published by the School Book Publishing Organization (OEBD) and distributed by the Ministry of Education on the occasion of the Year of Greek Tradition. The cover shows dancers performing the Tsakonian dance, while there are extensive references to its ancient Greek origins inside (Stratou, 1979).

An important role in the rise of the Tsakonian dance on a nationwide level in Greece was played by the region’s intellectuals, local government, the Tsakonian Archives, Tsakonian associations of Piraeus and Athens, the local press and Physical Education teachers.

As for the teaching of the dance in schools, C. Sakellariou first taught the Tsakonian dance in the Gymnastics Academy and the Lyceum Club of Greek Women in the 1930s. Since then, the Tsakonian dance has been included in the teaching material for Greek traditional dance in all the Faculties of Physical Education and Sport Science throughout the country (National and Capodistrian University of Athens, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Democritus University of Thrace, Serres, Trikala).

The Tsakonian dance was included in the junior high school curriculum as part of Physical Education classes. Since 1999, the teaching of the Tsakonian dance has also been included in the elementary education curriculum, specifically in the textbooks of grades 3 and 4 of elementary school. It is a subject in the interdisciplinary curriculum in exemplary teaching approaches, combining the myth of Theseus and the labyrinth with the Tsakonian dance. It was also, and still is, one of the most commonly performed dances at school events.

Thus, the Tsakonian dance is now danced all over Greece, at performances of folk dances by dance associations and at school events. A search on the internet shows that it can be found in elementary schools from Leonidio to Piraeus and Edessa, and from Mesogeia to Rhodes and Crete.

This does not mean, of course, that the dance is executed in the best possible way. According to local dancers from Tsakonia, it has been made “ballet-like”, so as to be more spectacular, thus losing many of its historical features. The Tsakonians do not recognise “our dance” in such performances, but some other dance “construct”.

The former mayor of Leonidio, D. Tsingounis (interview, April 2008), states that “the schools promoted the dance, the difference being that they changed it”. At the 2nd Tsakonian Congress in Leonidio in 1987, Simon Karas noted pointedly:

The Tsakonians, then, dance the “Tsakonikon dance” as a tradition... and they make sure that they dance it respectfully and seriously, not with the puppetry and ballet-style antics of the Gymnastics Academy and the various urban high school dance teachers, who – for the most part – have no idea of and no tradition in the dance of the area where they are appointed... But dance – I mean Greek dance – is, with various Greek rhythmic formations, the expression of inner beliefs, feelings and impressions. It is something that is lived – not theatre – a way of life and an expression of emotions and beliefs, which those who detach it from tradition do not have... (Karas, 1996, p. 22).

### **Historical information on the bearers of the ICH element**

The collective memory of the Tsakonian dance that comes down to us through oral testimonies reaches as far back as 1843. In this year, King Othonas and Queen Amalia paid a visit to Leonidio. Here, they were hosted in the house of N. Hatzipanagiotis, where a “dance was held in honour of the distinguished guests, on the upper roof” (Rousali-Diatsintou, 2002:64). They danced the Tsakonian dance, dressed in local costumes and to the songs “All the Tsakonian young men and all the fine young men went...” and “On the crest of Ai-Lias Mantas sits and writes...” The lead dancer was the wife of N. Poutselas, who was said to be very tall and beautiful and who danced in front of Queen Amalia. N. Poutselas would tell this story with great pride to his son, who passed it on to his grandchildren (Pitselas, 2004-2005, and oral testimony, 2008).

We first encounter the name “Tsakonikos” for the dance in the press of 1928, where we read:

This year, the Carnival at Lenodio was very busy. Mrs Trochani held the first dance evening [...] which was very successful and a good example for our fellow townspeople, who would not want to miss out on such things [...] Last Thursday a big dance evening was held by Mr and Mrs Kokkinou, the manager of the local branch of the Bank of Athens. Almost all Leonidio society was present. The full orchestra, conducted by Mr Bekyros, put wings on the dancers’ feet and kept the spirits flowing until the early hours. The baritone Mr Portsalos, appearing for the first time in the salons, sang *Rigoletto* to great effect and was applauded by all present. Mr and Mrs Mangoulis distinguished themselves in the foxtrot thanks to the joy of their moves. Mr Papageorgiou to the rhythm of the Charleston. Mr Ilias Sioras with the *Tsakonikon dance* ... (*Kynouria* newspaper, 20-2-1928).

There was also a report in the local press on the participation of dancers from Leonidio, directed by A. Katsingris, physical education teacher at the Leonidio Junior High School, at the anniversary event of 4 August 1938, held at the Panathinaikon Stadium in Athens, where they performed the dance. As we read in the local newspaper:

At the celebrations in Athens for the anniversary of the 4th of August a 40-member group of young men and women from our town participated and made a great impression. They wore the *foustanella* and old-style costumes and drew attention and interest during the festivities at the Stadium, drawing warm praise from the Prime Minister and other dignitaries, both for their rhythmic and idiosyncratic dances and for their excellent appearance in general. Our group was given an honorary position in the stadium and came first among those performing dances. The Tsakonians of the capital were greatly moved and applauded the bright young men and women of our homeland and warmly congratulated them for their brilliance and the honour they have bestowed on our homeland (*Kynouria* newspaper, issue 259-260, 1-9-1938).

Kostakis, professor of linguistics, who has done much research into the Tsakonian dialect and who hails from Melana, writes:

In the past, the most common dances in the Tsakonian villages were [...] “The closed dance” or the “They went”, the latter title coming from the first two words of one of the few songs that is danced: “All the Tsakonian young men and all the fine young men went...” The “closed dance” is thus called because the dancers hold onto each other with their fingers tightly interlaced and their elbows united, without handkerchiefs, so that the circle appears to be one body, without any space between the dancers. This is the “Tsakonian dance”, the name of which was unknown in our villages in the old days, as was the ethnic name Tsakonas. And these terms can today be heard coming from non-scholars, but in the old days the Tsakonians would simply use the phrase “our thing”, our dance (Kostakis, 1994).

## **V. Importance of the element for the Intangible Cultural Heritage**

### **1. Enhancement**

Tsakonia is known for the linguistic idiom used by its inhabitants, which in recent years has been presented, justifiably, as a special feature of the local identity. Yet, the Tsakonian dance is another important characteristic that creates a sense of community among all those who consider themselves to be Tsakonian. For this reason, it is important that all those who are taught the Tsakonian dance as part of a dance company, etc. – far, that is, from the cultural and social environment in which it was born – have the opportunity actually to experience themselves the festivals and celebrations of the region, to be initiated into them as well as into the importance that the dance has for the Tsakonian people and how it makes them feel.

It is very important that those who teach the Tsakonian dance throughout Greece have the opportunity to get to know the place where the Tsakonians danced it and

continue to dance it in their homeland. This could be done through recordings by local singers and musicians as well as videos, which could be used in workshops and as teaching material for schools and associations.

We hope that the inclusion of the Tsakonian dance in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage will be the starting point for this.

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Accompanying documentary material

Bibliography-archive research:

In situ research-interviews:

Audio recording:

Photo recording:

Video recording:

## **Appendix**

The songs that accompany the Tsakonian dance are:

1. “I told you mother...”

I told you mother, my good mother, I told you to give me in marriage.

I told you mother, give me in marriage, domesticate me.

And abroad, dear mother, don't give me away abroad,

And don't give me away abroad, mother, you will regret it.

For in foreign lands, my good mother, in foreign lands I will fall ill,

For in foreign lands I will fall ill and which mother shall I ask for.

I will talk, my good mother, I will talk to my sister-in-law,



I will talk to my sister-in-law and to my first sister-in-law by marriage.

They will tell me, my good mother, they will tell me that I do not have a chance,

They will tell me that I do not have a chance and that I will sigh deeply.[\[9\]](#)

The song “I will tell you mother” appears in around 1917-1918 and was set to music in 1925 by S. Ioannides. When the Tsakonian dance left its narrow local framework and was incorporated into the “national” repertoire, it became known throughout Greece with this song. The song talks of migration and the daughter bidding farewell to her mother and her homeland. It is a well-known fact that migration lefts its mark on Tsakonia, given that many Tsakonians left their homeland to seek a better future elsewhere. There are many recordings of this song, such as those by S. Ioannides (1925), T. Papaspyropoulos (1931), T. Georgiades (1947) and A. Lavdas (1951).

## 2. “The Tsakonian young men went...”

The Tsakonian young men – and *aman, aman* – the Tsakonian young men went,

The Tsakonian young men and all the Tsakonian youth.

And they are going – and *aman, aman* – to the quarter over there,

To the quarter over there, where the pretty girls are.

And there they got caught – and *aman, aman* – there they got caught in the rain,

And there they got caught in the rain, a slow, humble rain.

They got wet – and *aman, aman* – the tall young men got wet,

The tall young men got wet and the white shirts.

Eleni – and *aman, aman* – Eleni light a fire,

Eleni light a fire so the tall young men can dry off.

According to testimonies, this song is one of the oldest to be documented. It was sung in the salon of the Hatzipanagiotis house at the dance given by the people of Leonidio in honour of Queen Amalia and King Othon in Leonidio in 1843.

### 3. “Mantas”

On Ai- – Vlachothanasso – on Ai-Lias’ crest,

On the crest of Ai-Lias Mantas sits and writes.

With a lamp – Vlachothanasso – with a lamp, with lanterns,

With a lamp, with lanterns, with three hundred young men.

The girl – Vlachothanasso – the girl goes to pass,

The girl goes to pass and finds Mantas writing.

A girl passes – Vlachothanasso – a girl passes, don’t be frightened,

A girl passes, don’t be frightened and you will be my mate.[\[10\]](#)

This is a historical song: Mantas was a legendary Tsakonian brigand. \_

### 4. “Birbilomata” (Playful eyes)

From the City, birb- birbilomata, from the City I come,

From the City I come and into a little garden I go.

I find the, birb- birbilomata, I find the trees plentiful,

I find the trees plentiful, lemon and cypress trees.

I find an, birbilomata, I find an apple tree in the middle,

I find an apple tree in the middle and it droops like a rod about to fall.

And the brigand goes, birb- birbilomata, the brigand goes to steal them,

And the brigand goes to steal them and unripe pick them off.

Brigand don’t, birb- birbilomata, steal the apples,

Brigand don’t steal the apples, the leaves will wither.

The lord has, birb- birbilomata, the lord has them counted,

The lord has them counted and the lady accounted for.

This song was a favourite among the Tsakonians of Constantinople, who sang it when they went to Leonidio to get married. According to local tradition, it was selected by the Leonidian Thodorakis Dounias, grandson of the warrior of the Greek War of Independence and besieger of Tripolitsa.

5. “Today I came out to enjoy” (19th century)

Today I came out, and *aman, aman*, today I came out to enjoy,  
Today I came out to enjoy, whom I beat, whom I thrashed.  
Whom I bad..., and *aman, aman*, whom I badmouthed,  
Whom I badmouthed, whose girl I kissed.  
And if I kissed, and *aman, aman*, if I kissed her let her tell,  
And if I kissed her let her tell, the shame will be on her.[\[11\]](#)

6. “Your tiles are dripping” (19th century).

Your tiles are dripping – and *aman, aman* – your tiles are dripping  
Your tiles are dripping, your eyebrows are black seagulls  
And my – and *aman, aman* – and my heart is also dripping  
And my heart is also dripping for a neighbour girl  
Go mother – good mother – go mother and tell her  
Go mother and tell her secretly, discuss it with her  
His mother goes by – and *aman, aman* – his good mother goes by  
His good mother goes by and finds the girl sewing  
Greetings, girl, fine greetings  
Fine greetings, a welcome to the mother of Kostis  
Girl, my son – and *aman, aman* – girl, my son loves you  
Girl, my son loves you and is too embarrassed to tell you  
If he loves me – good mother – if he loves me but is embarrassed  
If he loves me but is embarrassed what’s the point of words  
Or:  
Your tiles are dripping – and *aman, aman* – your tiles are dripping  
Your tiles are dripping, your eyebrows are black seagulls...  
They are dripping and resisting, in my heart they slaughter me...

All the Tsakonian young men and all the fine young men went...  
And are going to the quarter over there, where the pretty girls are...  
This song was recorded by Papaspyropoulos in 1931.

7. "Opposite Marathias"

Opposite, Kyra Maria, opposite Marathias  
opposite Marathias and beneath the olive tree  
The ox went, Kyra Maria, the ox went to the olive tree  
The ox went to the olive tree and broke the jar.  
And what cries, the poor thing, because the jar was broken.  
Because the jar was broken, which will go to Uncle Lias.

8. "Father, I will go to get married"

Father, I will go to get married,  
Mother, I will get up and leave.  
I will take Giorgous' daughter  
Who spins all day.  
Who makes a hundred spindles a day,  
And fifteen loops.  
Who has fields in Socha,  
Fields in Koromilies.  
Who also has on her door  
Five or six mulberry roots.

9. "Down at the sacred grove"

Down at the sacred grove a laurel and an apple tree are arguing,  
The fine young man sought a twig from the laurel...

The laurel gave a twig and he turned to take it...

But the laurel is bitter and the sprig was hard ...

10. “My broad-leafed vine”

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A widow with six, seven orphans and heavy debts they'd given her,  
Went out to her closely-pruned vine  
My vine broad-leafed and closely pruned,  
Why don't you blossom, why don't you bear fruit, why don't you produce grapes?  
They've given me heavy debts and I will sell you!  
Don't sell me, my lady, because I will bail you out!  
Get some young men to dig me, some old men to prune me  
And three maidens to crop me  
And with my bunches of grapes you will pay off your debts...

According to the testimony of E. Vagena, the schoolgirls of Agios Petros in Kynouria would perform the Tsakonian dance to this song in 1930.

[1] An ICH element is understood to be the realisation or accomplishment or performance of activities and actions forming a distinct ensemble that constitutes a representative expression of ICH.

[2] Short presentation (one sentence) of the identity of the ICH element. Henceforth this will be the identity under which the element will be recognised.

[3] ICH domain: The element can pertain to more than one domain.

[4] Key words allow the recognition of the identity of the element. e.g. ritual, celebration, events, artistic activity, traditional skills, traditional craftsmanship, etc.

[5] Choose which among the categories below the bearer of the ICH element belongs to.

[6] If this is chosen, fill in a category that does not exist in the fields above.

[7] E.g. Mayor, president of an association, etc.

[8] According to D. Stratou (1979, p. 19), “the Tsakonikos was known as the Labyrinth” and “the Tsakonikos was a remnant from many years before as the dance which, with ‘its coil’, gave the impression of a Labyrinth, with Theseus as

the first dancer, helping his companions to leave the labyrinth, supposedly holding the thread/handkerchief which Ariadne/the girl had given him”.

[9] Songs 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 9 are from the collection of S. Rousali-Diatsintou, as published in her book *Folklore of Leonidio* (in Greek).

[10] Songs 3 and 7 were sung to the author by D. Vlamis, also known as Dolas.

[11] This song is from the personal collection of P. Pitselas.